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U.S. Serial No. 10/825,076
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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Complete Listing of Claims:

1. – 40. (Canceled)

41. (Previously presented) A method for suppressing vehicle fires, comprising:

sensing a rear impact collision; and

activating a fire suppression system fit into an automobile according to at least one condition selected from the group consisting of acceleration, deceleration, speed, time, temperature, fuel, fuel level, fire, smoke, light transmittance and optical signature in response to said rear impact collision, and wherein the fire suppression system includes a container containing a propellant and a fluid fire suppressant, wherein the propellant is functional to propel the fluid fire suppressant from the container; and a surfactant in the fluid fire suppressant enhances the film-forming capability of the fluid fire suppressant on a fuel.

42. (Original) The method of claim 41, further comprising: activating the fire suppression system after expiration of a time period on a condition of acceleration or deceleration that is indicative of a collision.

43. (Original) The method of claim 41, further comprising: activating the fire suppression system on a condition of acceleration or deceleration that is indicative of a collision and on a condition of temperature that is indicative of a fire.

44. (Original) The method of claim 41, further comprising: activating the fire suppression system on a condition of acceleration or deceleration that is indicative of a collision and on a condition of smoke that is indicative of a fire.

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45. (Original) The method of claim 41, further comprising: activating the fire suppression system on a condition of acceleration or deceleration that is indicative of a collision and on a condition of speed that is indicative of the vehicle slowing down.
46. (Original) The method of claim 41, further comprising: activating the fire suppression system on a condition of acceleration or deceleration that is indicative of a collision and on a condition of speed that is indicative of the vehicle stopping.
47. (Original) The method of claim 41, further comprising: aborting the fire suppression system so as not to activate even if one or more instruments are indicating a condition that would otherwise cause activation.
48. (Original) The method of claim 41, further comprising: activating the fire suppression system with a manual activate switch even if the instruments are indicating a condition that would otherwise not cause activation.
49. (Original) The method of claim 41, further comprising: activating the fire suppression system on any two conditions selected from the group consisting of acceleration, deceleration, temperature, speed, smoke, fuel level, fuel, time and fire.
50. (Previously presented) A method for suppressing vehicle fires, comprising: activating a fire suppression system fit into an automobile on a condition of acceleration or deceleration and on a condition of speed and on a condition of time, provided the vehicle has reached a minimum speed condition and a time delay after an acceleration or deceleration condition indicative of a collision is adjusted according to the speed that is in excess of the minimum speed at the time of collision, and wherein the fire suppression system includes a container containing a propellant and a fluid fire suppressant, wherein the propellant is functional to propel the fluid fire suppressant from the container; and a surfactant in the fluid fire suppressant enhances the film-forming capability of the fluid fire suppressant on a fuel.

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51. (Original) The method of claim 41, further comprising: activating the fire suppression system on a condition of acceleration or deceleration indicative of a collision and on a condition of fuel being detected that is indicative of a fuel spill.

52. (Original) The method of claim 41, further comprising: activating the fire suppression system on a condition of acceleration or deceleration indicative of a collision and on a condition of fuel level that is indicative of a fuel spill.

53. (Original) The method of claim 41, further comprising: activating the fire suppression system on a condition of acceleration or deceleration indicative of a collision and on a condition of fire being detected.

54. (Canceled)

55. (Previously presented) An automotive vehicle, comprising:

a vehicle body;

a reservoir containing a fire suppressant agent, with said reservoir being mounted in proximity to said body;

a distribution system for receiving the fire suppressant agent from said reservoir and for conducting the fire suppressant agent to at least one location about said body;

a sensor system for determining whether the vehicle has been subjected to an impact and whether the vehicle is moving subsequent to such an impact; and

a controller, operatively connected with said sensor system and said reservoir, for causing said reservoir to initiate delivery of the fire suppressant agent from the reservoir to the distribution system.

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56. (Previously presented) A method for operating a fire suppression system installed in an automotive vehicle, comprising the steps of:

sensing an impact upon the vehicle;

sensing the vehicle's speed following the impact; and

discharging a fire suppression agent from an onboard reservoir in the event that the vehicle's speed crosses a predetermined speed threshold following sensing of an impact.

57. (Previously presented) The method of claim 41 including selecting said propellant to be a solid propellant.

58. (Previously presented) The method of claim 57, further comprising: activating the fire suppression system on a condition of acceleration or deceleration detecting a collision and provided that the vehicle has reached a desired speed following said collision.

59. (Previously presented) The method of claim 57, further comprising: activating the fire suppression system on a condition of acceleration or deceleration detecting a collision and after a predetermined period of time following said collision.

60. (Previously presented) The method of claim 57, wherein said fire suppressant is discharged at an underside location of said vehicle.

61. (Previously presented) The automotive vehicle of claim 55 wherein said reservoir includes a gas generator effective to generate a propellant for establishing a pressure effective to deliver said fire suppressant agent to said distribution system.

62. (Previously presented) The automotive vehicle of claim 61 wherein said gas generator is a pyrotechnic gas generator.

63. (Previously presented) The automotive vehicle of claim 62 wherein said propellant is selected to be a solid.

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64. (Previously presented) The automotive vehicle of claim 61 wherein said at least one location about said body includes an underside of said vehicle body.

65. (Previously presented) The automotive vehicle of claim 62 wherein said at least one location about said body includes an underside of said vehicle body.

66. – 70. (Canceled)